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Message Text

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12
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APPROVED BY PM/ISO - JD STODDART
EA/ANP - MR. MOSER
EUR/NE - MR. ANDREWS
IO/UNP - MR. THOMPSON
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R 162143Z MAY 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102523

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS:MARR, IO, UK, AS
SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN

REF: STATE 100019

1. MCKEOWN, AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY CALLED ON STODDART, PM TODAY FOR PLAY-BACK ON LAST WEEK'S US-UK INDIAN OCEAN TALKS IN LONDON AND TO FOLLOW-ON SNEIDER-FERNANDEZ DISCUSSION OF MAY 13 ON UN EXPERTS REPORT ON INDIAN OCEAN (REFTEL).

2. REGARDING US-UK TALKS STODDART SUMMARIZED HIGH POINTS OF LONDON AGENDA FOLLOWING THE RULE OF COMMON-SENSE AS AGREED BY THOMSON AND WEISS IN INFORMING INTERESTED THIRD PARTIES OF LONDON DISCUSSIONS. WE NOTED THE WIDE AREA OF AGREEMENT IN RESPECTIVE US-UK ASSESSMENTS OF AREA PARTICULARLY WITH REGARD TO CURRENT LEVEL OF SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE
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AND IMPLICATIONS A REOPENED SUEZ CANAL WOULD HAVE IN EN-

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HANCING THAT PRESENCE- MCKEOWN WAS ADVISED OF COLLECTIVE US-UK JUDGMENT THAT WE SHOULD FOCUS ON COLLATING AVAILABLE INFORMATION TO MAKE MORE PERSUASIVE CASE TO LITTORALS OF CURRENT AND POTENTIAL SOVIET MILITARY CAPABILITIES IN AREA. WE FELT BERBERA SHOULD BE CLOSELY WATCHED IN THIS RESPECT.

3. MCKEOWN WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN QUESTION OF ARMS LIMITATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE UN EXPERTS REPORT. WE MERELY REITERATED THAT WHAT SNEIDER HAD TOLD FERNANDEZ (REFTEL) WAS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME POSITION WE HAD CONVEYED TO BRITS (I.E., THIS WAS A QUESTION UNDER CLOSE REVIEW WITHIN USG AND ONE ON WHICH WE WILL KEEP IN CLOSE CONTACT FOLLOWING FINAL DEVELOPMENT OF US POSITION). WE ALSO NOTED TO MCKEOWN THAT UK WAS ENGAGED IN THEIR DE- FENSE REVIEW WHICH NECESSARILY MADE MANY JUDGMENTS OF UK SIDE IN LONDON TENTATIVE AND PRELIMINARY. DEFENSE REVIEW WHEN COMPLETED UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD TOUCH ON THE QUESTION OF ARMS LIMITATION AS WELL AS THE FUTURE CHARACTER OF THE UK MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA.

4. MCKEOWN THEN PROVIDED US REPORT HIS EMBASSY HAD RE- CEIVED FROM THEIR UN MISSION IN NEW YORK ON THE EXPERTS REPORT. AUSTRALIAN UN MISSION CITES DISCUSSION BETWEEN MCINTYRE AND UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL SHEVCHENKO ON MAY 10 WHICH REGISTERED AUSTRALIAN CONCERN REGARDING UNBALANCED TONE OF REPORT IN SINGLING OUT AUSTRALIA FOR PARTICULAR AND DETAILED ATENTION AND CONTENTION THAT AUTHORS HAD EXCEEDED THEIR MANDATE IN PREPARING THEIR REPORT. IN RESPONSE SHEVCHENKO NOTED THAT HE AND SYG HAD BEEN WORRIED ABOUT THE REPORT AND SAID "HE UNDERSTOOD AND SYMPATHIZED WITH OUR (AUSTRALIAN) CONCERN AND FULLY EXPECTED THAT BEFORE LONG THE AMERICANS AND RUSSIANS WOULD ALSO BE IN TO COMPLAIN." SHEVCHENKO DEFENDED THE SYG BY NOTING HE HAD KEPT HIMSELF AS NEUTRAL AS POSSIBLE, SIMPLY TRANSMIT- TING THE REPORT TO THE GA WITH A BRIEF INTRODUCTORY NOTE. ACCORDING TO AUSTRALIAN MISSION THEY WERE ENCOURAGED BY SHEVCHENKO TO FULLY LAY OUT THEIR RESERVATIONS TO THE REPORT. AUSTRALIAN UN MISSION ALSO TALKED TO BJORNERSTEDT, DIRECTOR OF THE DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS DIVISION, WHO ALLEGED- CONFIDENTIAL

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LY EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR AUSSIES HAVING INFORMED HIM OF "THE EXTENT OF THE DISASTER." BJORNERSTEDT CONCLUDED THAT THE REPORT WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE IF THE SECRET- ARIAT HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN TONING DOWN AN EARLIER VERSION.

5. EMBASSY LONDON MAY WISH TO APPRISE FCO OF OUR DEBRIEF OF MCKEOWN ON LAST WEEKS TALKS. MEANWHILE, WE WILL BE

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PREPARING IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL COMMENTS TO ADDRESSEES AND OTHER INTERESTED POSTS ON SPECIFIC VIEWS AS TO HOW WE SHOULD TREAT SO CALLED EXPERTS REPORT IN ANTICIPATION IT WILL OCCUPY CENTER STAGE AT SCHEDULED AD HOC UN INDIAN OCEAN COMMITTEE MEETING BEGINNING JUNE 3. RUSH

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